



Mexican Wolf Blue Range Reintroduction Project Monthly Update

December 1-31, 2013

The following is a summary of Mexican Wolf Reintroduction Project (Project) activities in Arizona on the Apache-Sitgreaves National Forests (ASNF) and Fort Apache Indian Reservation (FAIR) and in New Mexico on the Apache National Forest (ANF) and Gila National Forest (GNF). Non-tribal lands involved in this Project are collectively known as the Blue Range Wolf Recovery Area (BRWRA). Additional Project information can be obtained by calling (928) 339-4329 or toll free at (888) 459-9653, or by visiting the Arizona Game and Fish Department website at <http://www.azgfd.gov/wolf> or by visiting the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service website at <http://www.fws.gov/southwest/es/mexicanwolf>. Past updates may be viewed on either website, or interested parties may sign up to receive this update electronically by visiting <http://www.azgfd.gov/signup>. This update is a public document and information in it can be used for any purpose. The Reintroduction Project is a multi-agency cooperative effort among the Arizona Game and Fish Department (AGFD), USDA Forest Service (USFS), USDA-Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Wildlife Services (USDA-APHIS WS), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the White Mountain Apache Tribe (WMAT).

To view weekly wolf telemetry flight location information or the 3-month wolf distribution map, please visit <http://www.azgfd.gov/wolf>. On the home page, go to the “Wolf Location Information” heading on the right side of the page near the top and scroll to the specific location information you seek.

Please report any wolf sightings or suspected livestock depredations to: (928) 339-4329 or toll free at (888) 459-9653. To report incidents of take or harassment of wolves, please call the AGFD 24-hour dispatch (Operation Game Thief) at (800) 352-0700.

Numbering System: Mexican wolves are given an identification number recorded in an official studbook that tracks their history. Capital letters (M = Male, F = Female) preceding the number indicate adult animals 24 months or older. Lower case letters (m = male, f = female) indicate wolves younger than 24 months or pups. The capital letter “A” preceding the letter and number indicate breeding wolves.

Definitions: A “wolf pack” is defined as two or more wolves that maintain an established territory. In the event that one of the two alpha (dominant) wolves dies, the remaining alpha wolf, regardless of pack size, retains the pack status. The packs referenced in this update contain at least one wolf with a radio telemetry collar attached to it. The Interagency Field Team (IFT)

recognizes that wolves without radio telemetry collars may also form packs. If the IFT confirms that wolves are associating with each other and are resident within the same home range, they will be referenced as a pack.

CURRENT POPULATION STATUS

At the end of December 2013, the collared population consisted of 46 wolves with functional radio collars dispersed among 13 packs and five single wolves.

The USFWS extended the removal order for the Paradise Pack AF1056 until February 4, 2014. The IFT will continue attempts to capture AF1056 for removal for the duration of the removal order.

IN ARIZONA:

Bluestem Pack (collared AF1042, m1275, f1280, mp1330, mp1331, fp1332 and fp1333)

In December, the Bluestem Pack, except f1280, continued to use their traditional territory in the central portion of the ASNF. On December 11, the IFT was able to obtain photos from a trail camera indicating AM1038, a member of the former Hawks Nest Pack, and f1280 are traveling together.

Elk Horn Pack (collared AM1287 and F1294)

In December, the IFT located this pack traveling in the northeast portion of the ASNF in Arizona. The IFT documented two collared wolves traveling together in December.

Paradise Pack (collared AF1056)

During December, AF1056 and M1249, a dispersing wolf from the San Mateo Pack, continued to travel together in the Paradise Pack territory in the northern portion of the ASNF. A USFWS removal order for AF1056 issued in September has been extended to February 4, 2014. The IFT will continue attempts to capture AF1056 for removal for the duration of the removal order.

Rim Pack (collared AM1107 and f1305)

Throughout December, the IFT located AM1107 and f1305 using the south-central portion of the ASNF. The IFT has only documented the two collared wolves traveling together.

Maverick Pack (collared m1290, f1291, f1335 and mp1336)

In December, the Maverick Pack left the FAIR and has been traveling in the south central portion of ASNF. On December 30, f1335 was located separate from the Maverick Pack near the Black River south of PS Knoll.

ON THE FAIR:

Tsay o Ah Pack (collared AM1253 and f1283)

During December, the IFT located AM1253 on the FAIR. Wolf f1283 was located separate from AM1253 on the FAIR this month.

IN NEW MEXICO:

Canyon Creek Pack (collared M1252 and F1246)

In December, the IFT located these wolves traveling together in the central portion of the GNF. The IFT documented two wolves in this pack during December.

Dark Canyon Pack (collared AM992, AF923 and M1293)

Throughout December, the IFT located this pack within its traditional territory in the west-central portion of the GNF. The IFT documented five sets of tracks with the Dark Canyon Pack in December. On December 22, three wolves from the Dark Canyon Pack were observed on photos taken from a trail camera. On December 25, two wolves from the Dark Canyon Pack were observed on trail camera

Fox Mountain Pack (collared AM1158, AF1212, and M1276)

During December, the IFT documented these wolves traveling in the northwest portion of the GNF and moving into San Mateo territory in the northeast portion of the GNF. The IFT obtained a visual of 4 wolves from the Fox Mountain Pack on December 22. On December 26 the IFT obtained another visual on two wolves from the Fox Mountain Pack.

Luna Pack (collared AM1155, AF1115, m1284, m1285, m1286 and m1337)

In December, the IFT located these wolves in the north-central portion of the GNF. The IFT located m1284, m1285 and 1286 separate from the two alpha wolves periodically throughout December. On December 28, the IFT received a report from a private trapper in New Mexico stating that the trapper had caught a wolf. The IFT responded to the area and processed, collared and designated the wolf m1337. The wolf is assumed to be a member of the Luna pack, since it was located within their territory.

Prieto Pack (collared F1251)

Throughout December, the IFT located this wolf in the north-central portion of the GNF. The IFT documented two sets of tracks associated with the Prieto Pack in December.

San Mateo Pack (collared AM1157, AF903, M1249, m1282 and f1327)

In December, the IFT located the San Mateo Pack in its traditional territory in the northern portion of the GNF. Dispersing wolf, M1249, continues to be located with AF1056 of the Paradise Pack. In December, m1282 has been located traveling outside of the San Mateo Pack territory, and the IFT located f1327 with single wolf M1296. The Fox Mountain Pack traveled into the San Mateo Pack territory periodically in December

Willow Springs Pack (collared M1185, F1279 and mp1329)

Throughout December, the IFT located these wolves in the north-central portion of the GNF. mp1329 was located separate from the Willow Springs Pack in December. The IFT documented tracks indicating the presence of uncollared wolves traveling with Willow Springs Pack.

M1240 (collared)

| The IFT documented this wolf traveling extensively throughout the BRWRA.

M1244 (collared)

In December, the IFT located this wolf traveling with Dark Canyon wolf f1278 in the central portion of the GNF, north of the Gila Wilderness.

f1278 (collared)

The IFT documented f1278 traveling with M1244 throughout the month of December in the south-central portion of the GNF.

f1295 (collared)

During December, the IFT did not locate f1295.

M1296 (collared)

In December, the IFT located this wolf traveling in the northeastern portion of the GNF and outside the BRWRA. In late-December, M1296 was located with f1327 from the San Mateo Pack.

MORTALITIES

In December, m1277 was found dead in New Mexico due to a gunshot wound. The incident is under investigation.

INCIDENTS

During December, there were no livestock depredation reports and no nuisance reports in the BRWRA.

CAPTIVE MANAGEMENT

On December 3, Project Personnel transferred M1215 and F1033 from the Sevilleta Wolf Management Facility to the Universidad Autonoma De Queretaro in Mexico.

On December 17, Project Personnel transferred M795 from the Ladder Ranch Wolf Management Facility to the New York Wolf Conservation Center. He is scheduled to be semen collected this year and will be retired from the reintroduction program.

On December 23, Project Personnel transferred M1133 from the Sevilleta Wolf Management Facility to the Ladder Ranch Wolf Management Facility to be placed in with F858 for companionship. Annual vaccinations and exams were also conducted on the remaining ten wolves at the Sevilleta Wolf Management Facility.

COMMUNICATION AND COORDINATION

On December 3, USFWS held a public hearing on USFWS proposals regarding Gray Wolf delisting nationally from the Endangered Species Act and Mexican Wolf relisting and 10j rule revisions at the Hon-Dah resort and casino on the FAIR.

PROJECT PERSONNEL

No significant activity to report.

REWARDS OFFERED

The USFWS is offering a reward of up to \$10,000; the AGFD Operation Game Thief is offering a reward of up to \$1,000; and the NMDGF is offering a reward of up to \$1,000 for information leading to the conviction of the individual(s) responsible for the shooting deaths of Mexican wolves. A variety of non-governmental organizations and private individuals have pledged an additional \$46,000 for a total reward amount of up to \$58,000, depending on the information provided.

Individuals with information they believe may be helpful are urged to call one of the following agencies: USFWS special agents in Mesa, Arizona, at (480) 967-7900, in Alpine, Arizona, at (928) 339-4232, or in Albuquerque, New Mexico, at (505) 346-7828; the WMAT at (928) 338-1023 or (928) 338-4385; AGFD Operation Game Thief at (800) 352-0700; or NMDGF Operation Game Thief at (800) 432-4263. Killing a Mexican wolf is a violation of the Federal Endangered Species Act and can result in criminal penalties of up to \$50,000, and/or not more than one year in jail, and/or a civil penalty of up to \$25,000.